

P R O S P E C T U S

OF THE

ANALYTICAL REVIEW,

OR

NEW LITERARY JOURNAL,

ON AN ENLARGED PLAN;

CONTAINING

SCIENTIFIC ABSTRACTS OF IMPORTANT AND INTERESTING WORKS;
A GENERAL CATALOGUE OF SUCH AS ARE OF LESS CONSEQUENCE, WITH SHORT CHARACTERS;
NOTICES, OR REVIEWS OF ALL VALUABLE FOREIGN BOOKS;
CRITICISMS ON NEW PIECES OF MUSIC AND WORKS OF ART;
AND
LITERARY INTELLIGENCE, FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC.

AT a time when Literary Journals are more numerous than useful, it seems necessary to state to the public, the reasons that have induced us to undertake the publication of a new one.

THE true design of a Literary Journal is, in our opinion, to give such an account of new publications, as may enable the reader to judge of them for himself.

THE want of time to draw up faithful accounts and abstracts of books, or the want of room to insert them when executed, introduced the practice of the *Journalists* themselves giving final judgments on the works that came before them: nor would we be understood to condemn all critical remarks—When *well-founded* and *candid*, they are undoubtedly useful.

BUT the most respectable of the earlier *Critics*, M. Le Clerc, M. de la Roche, &c. while they gave their own opinions of books, did not lose sight of the necessity of enabling their readers to judge for themselves, by such accounts and extracts, as were sufficient for that purpose. Whereas in later times, the writers of literary journals, flattered by the attention paid to their decisions, and gratified by the influence they have obtained over authors, have filled their publications with little else than their own opinions and judgments. The old Journalists appear, only to introduce their *Principals*, while the modern ones seem to mention these, only to bring forward *themselves*. To tell what is contained in a book, which ought to be their *great object*, is become with them a *secondary matter*: amidst the splendour of their remarks the original author is often eclipsed; and amidst the multitude of their criticisms, he is overwhelmed and lost.

BUT this is not all. Reviewers have engaged in *quarrels* with authors; and men without a name, from the shade of obscurity in which they were concealed, have ventured to abuse at random the first literary characters. In many cases they have entirely lost sight of that modesty,

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which ought always to accompany him, who being a private individual, presumes to speak to the public at large, and have set themselves up as oracles, and distributed from their dark thrones, decisions to regulate the ideas and sentiments of the literary world.

WHEN Literary Journalists make themselves parties in great controverted questions, they take an unfair advantage of an Author, because the circulation of their publication is much greater than that of his. They may mistake his meaning, or shamefully pervert it, and though he may make a complete defence against their attacks, yet his labour is in vain: the whole world reads the objections, while his answer scarcely extends beyond the narrow circle of his own friends. Thus the sale of his work, as far as their credit extends, is impeded. The consequence has been, that they have gradually lost that *impartiality* which we hold to be essential to their character, and have in many cases become mere party men, who wrote apparently for no other purpose, but to pull down or build up particular systems. Mysterious transactions have taken place between Authors or Booksellers and Reviewers, and the respectable part of the public, suspecting that there was more of this dishonourable business done than really was the case, have lost their confidence in such Critics; and thus the character and reputation of the journals have been injured and degraded.

BESIDE these reasons, which have induced us to meditate, for some time past, the publication of a New Work of this kind, we might mention others. The plan of the earlier Journalists who took in fewer books and gave a fuller account of them, appears to us preferable to that of the moderns, who, by taking in many, give an imperfect account of all. The press groans with trifling and temporary publications, while the number of truly STANDARD WORKS, which add to the stock of human knowledge, and will live beyond a day, is very small indeed. Of these only, a large account ought to be given, and that such a one as Le Clerc used to give; an account that in some degree conveyed to the reader a knowledge of the book—of the rest it is sufficient to put down the titles, or to give a brief character.

SINCE the discontinuance of Mr. Maty's Review, by the death of the learned author, we have had no Publication which has not been very deficient in communicating '*Literary News*.' It is indeed attended with trouble and expence, to collect such intelligence, but it forms in our opinion, a most interesting, and pleasant part of a Literary Journal. None of the elder writers omitted it, and in many of the foreign ones it is still retained. Every man of letters must regret the want of it in our own.

THE accounts of foreign Literature in our Journals have been censured, we think with some reason, as being often defective; and both foreign books, and those published at home, have been unaccountably delayed on many occasions. It occurs to us, that something might be done to remedy these defects by the publication of a New Work.

COULD we pursue our own plan it would be to have one purely analytical. The true idea of a Literary Journal is to give the HISTORY of the republic of letters. But as such a plan, however approved by the thinking few, would scarcely meet with encouragement, sufficient to defray the expences, from the public at large, accustomed to a different mode of reviewing, we have resolved not to attempt it on the *pure* analytical plan, but to take it up on another, which shall partly coincide with our own ideas, and partly with that pursued by the rest of our brethren. We adopt this, not as the best plan, but as the best that can be

be put in practice. This New Journal will appear monthly. It will have more of an analytical cast in it than any other, and on that account we shall call it, *The ANALYTICAL REVIEW*.

In the judgments given on books, the writers will endeavour to conduct themselves with that degree of modesty which is most suitable to their character. Where absurdity and immorality are attempted to be imposed on the public, they will certainly think themselves authorized to raise the rod of criticism, but will not deem themselves entitled to interfere in a dictatorial manner, when authors of approved learning and genius have produced a work containing an elaborate chain of facts and arguments, nor pretend by the hasty reading of an hour to confute the labour of years.

It has been proposed to us to receive from authors an analysis of their own works, and in some cases this may be desirable. Certainly no one is so well qualified to tell what is contained in a book as he who wrote it*. But at the same time we must add, that all such analyses must be subject to revision, and to such alterations as we judge necessary; because some authors, from the influence of particular motives, may be led to give too superficial an account of their works, while others, and these the far greater number, over-rating the importance of their own publications, may furnish more extended accounts than we could, in justice to our readers, insert.

COMMUNICATIONS of literary intelligence, are earnestly solicited, and will be properly attended to: letters from foreign correspondents may be written either in Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, or German.

SOME months ago, we circulated amongst our literary friends the preceding plan for the publication of a New Literary Journal. Objections may be made to any plan, but we are happy to find that ours has met with the approbation of those whose judgment we most respect, and whose esteem we are chiefly desirous to cultivate.

It has been insinuated that the Analytical Review originated from a party, and is meant to serve their purposes. We give ourselves little trouble about such reports. The public will soon judge from the execution of our work, whether we are sincere or not in our professions of impartiality, and to them we appeal.

It has been recommended to us to announce the deaths of learned persons, and to add, when it can be got, a short account of their lives, and a list of their writings. We shall be happy to communicate intelligence of this kind to our readers, and shall deem ourselves obliged to any one who will furnish us with authentic information.

We beg leave to repeat our request, that those who have access to sources of intelligence, will be kind enough to favour us with communications relative to the state of literature and arts, new discoveries, new publications, &c. We hope to render this part of our work equally amusing and instructive, but much will depend on the liberality of such persons as have it in their power to give us information. Those whose object it is to diffuse intelligence over the kingdom in general, or to announce it to foreign nations, will probably find their advantage in communicating it to us, it being one part of our design to establish a repository for genuine information in every department

* "Celui qui a composé un livre seroit le plus propre à l'abrégé, et le Journaliste ne peut réussir qu'en revêtant en partie le caractère de l'Auteur," M. Maty. Bib. Britannique, To. 1.

of Literature and Science. And we hope ingenious men, who have made discoveries, will see the propriety of our opinion, that it is much better to gratify the curiosity of mankind by a short authentic account, than to suffer them to be misrepresented, misconceived, traduced, and ridiculed by the false reports and absurd stories which are commonly propagated in such cases. For the public are inquisitive, and where they cannot procure a true account, will rather listen to a doubtful one than have none.

* * The first number of this work was published in June last; it is continued on the first day of every month: each number contains eight sheets, or 128 pages, price 1s. 6d.

The first volume, consisting of five numbers, is now completed, price 7s. 6d. in boards. It contains a complete and scientific Analysis of the following interesting works.

DE ROSSI's Various Readings of the Old Testament, 4 vols. 4to.

KING's Morfels of Criticism to illustrate the Scriptures, 4to.

GIBBON's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vols. 4th, 5th, and 6th, 4to.

PRIESTLEY's Lectures on History and General Policy, 4to.

REID's Essays on the active Powers of Man, 4to.

TAYLOR's Commentaries of Proclus, 4to.

PHARMACOPOEIA of the London College, 4to.

POTTER's Sophocles, 4to.

PHILOSOPH. TRANSACTIONS of the Royal Society of London, 4to.

IBID. of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, 4to.

LAVATER's Aphorisms on Man, 12mo.

PORTAL on Mephitic Vapours and Canine Madness, 8vo.

MISS SMITH's Emmeline, or the Orphan of the Castle, 4 vols. 12mo.

KEATE's Account of the Pelew Islands, 4to.

GOODWYN on the Connexion of Life with Respiration, 8vo.

WILKINS's Heetopades of Veshneco Sarma, 8vo.

NEWCOME's Translation of Ezekiel, 4to.

From the accurate and elaborate manner in which these works are analysed, the completion of some of them is unavoidably deferred to the second volume. Besides these analyses of the principal works published in this year, this volume contains short accounts of a great number of books and pamphlets of less consequence; criticisms on new pieces of music; a review of the capital paintings in the last exhibition of the Royal Academy; the progress of the arts; abstracts of interesting papers in the journals of Crell & De Rozier; chemical and medical discoveries; notices of important literary plans in England; and regular advertisements, generally accompanied with short characters, of all the important books published in France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Prussia, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, &c. shewing the employments of the learned in different parts of Europe, and pointing out to literary men here, the *sources* where they may derive information relative to the subjects of their own pursuits. So complete a view of foreign literature has never yet been attempted in any Journal, and, it is presumed, gives the NEW REVIEW a just claim to the title of

THE HISTORY OF THE LITERATURE OF EUROPE.

The second volume will commence with the month of September, and be published on the first of October.

Communications are to be sent to the publisher,

J. JOHNSON, N^o 72, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, LONDON,
where the first volume, or any single number, may be had.